

Braintree Youth Flag Football League Rules

The Basics

A coin toss determines first possession.

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.

If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.

Defensive alignments must be man-to-man coverage. No Zone/Area coverage is allowed.

All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

Interceptions may be returned.

Teams change sides after the first 20 minutes. Possession changes to loser of coin toss unless deferred and the clock does not stop.

Scoring

Touchdown: 6 points

Extra point:

1 point (played from 5-yard line) consisting of PASS play only – or –

2 points (played from 12-yard line) consisting of either a RUN or PASS play

Safety: 2 points

Running

The quarterback cannot run with the ball unless handed back off (i.e. reversal) or thrown to them as a forward pass that is received across the line of scrimmage.

Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs but laterals are not allowed.

“No-running zones” are located five yards from each end zone and five yards on either side of midfield. These pass only zones are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.

The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Spinning is allowed, but **players cannot leave their feet** to avoid a defensive player.

Diving for flags is not allowed.

The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

The player's feet must cross the goal line for a touchdown.

Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed

Absolutely NO SNEAK PLAYS, Quarterback, Center or other, are allowed.

Braintree Youth Flag Football League Rules

Receiving

All players are eligible to receive passes, including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage, but passes **MUST** cross the line of scrimmage.

Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Dead Balls

The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled “dead” when:

- Ball carrier’s flag is pulled
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds
- Touchdown or safety is scored
- Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground
- Ball carrier’s flag falls out

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the players feet were when the ball hit the ground.

Passing

Shovel passes are allowed but the ball **MUST** move forward of the line of scrimmage.

The quarterback has a **five-second** “pass clock.” **If a pass is not thrown within the five seconds, play continues and all players may rush the quarterback.**

Once the ball is handed off, the five-second rule no longer is in effect. All players may pursue the ball carrier

Interceptions may be returned.

Rushing the Quarterback

A marker, or linesman, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage for the rusher to stand on.

The player who rushes the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

Any number of players can rush the quarterback once the defensive designated rusher crosses the line of scrimmage or a hand-off occurs.

Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

Remember, no blocking, plays that utilize blocking interferences or tackling is allowed.

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game.

FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal and will not be tolerated.

Braintree Youth Flag Football League Rules

League Officials, including referees have the right to determine offensive language. (Language and actions that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators is considered to be trash talk.)

If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the referee must contact a director on duty and the player or players will be ejected from the game.

Players/Game Schedules

Teams must field the minimum numbers of players for their division at all times. Players should be allowed the opportunity to experience each position during each game. Games are scheduled to begin on the hour beginning at 5:30 pm.

Timing/Overtime

Games are played to 40 minutes running time. However, in the last minute of play in each half the clock stops if any of the following occurs: a 30 second time-out is called; an incomplete pass or a player goes out of bounds.

If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime.

A coin flip (called by the home team captain) determines who gets the ball first.

The first team to score wins.

Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

Each team has one 30-second time-out per half.

Officials can stop the clock at their discretion (i.e. injury, etc.)

Penalties

All penalties will be called by the referee and is at their discretion.

Defensive Penalties

- Offsides: Five yards and automatic first down
- Interference: 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal contact: (holding, blocking, etc.)10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal FLAG pull: (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down
- Illegal rushing: (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)10 yards and automatic first down

Offensive Penalties

- Illegal motion: (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) Five yards and loss of down
- Illegal forward pass: (pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage) Five yards and loss of down
- Offensive pass interference: (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down
- FLAG guarding 10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down

Braintree Youth Flag Football League Rules

- Delay of game
Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

Coaches and other adults are not permitted to speak with the referees at any time.

Attire

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made prior to game.

Official NFL FLAG jersey and flags must be worn during play

Belts should be trimmed so that they do not interfere with flag

Shirts cannot interfere with the visibility and access to the flags. Participants should tuck their shirts in while playing.

All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions. If a player does not have a mouthpiece, jersey and flags – they cannot play.

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Other Notes: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed ever. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Braintree Youth Flag Football League Rules

